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Mariama Khain Interviews Yema Janga about Kim Language

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Recording in Tamuke.

Present: Mama Kain, Yema/Kema Janga, Hannah Sarvasy, Solomon Kine.

Cassette side B, number xv

Prompt (through SK): Anything you want to say to the world about who you are.

MK: Kema, (KJ: Mm?) yenda binde Kimmɔi yeni, agbena hiye, ha na ge hɔ, apuma ha ha mɔ hɔ, Keni yi leeye, apuma hiye ha cen hɔwa.

Kema, (Yes?) what is the reason that this Kim language, our parents, they were speaking it, their children spoke it, but we are left, our children don't speak it.

Note 'stative' (hypoth.) hɔwa.

KJ: ε, yeni hun ha cen hɔ, ha cen hɔwa Kimmɔi? (MK: Mm.)

Eh, the reason that they don't speak, they don't speak the Kim language?

Agbena ha, ε- agbena hiye ha ma dungun, mɔ Mende.

Their parents, eh- our parents did not teach us the Mende language.

Ha ma dungun mɔ Mende. Ha dumgo a wɔ: hun kun moga, hun kun moga oo.

They did not teach the Mende language. They taught this: Come drink at the breast, come drink at the breast o.

Ha le: tɔn yoo. Tɔn yangwε. Wɔ yang na go, hantiga wɔ yang na go, "Hun tɔn yoo, hun mu moga."

They said: Stop o. Stop crying. If she cried, if the child cried, "Come stop o, come suckle at the breast."

"Hun mu moga," yeni hun ha cen hɔwa, yeni ya ma na hɔwan mɔ Kimi.

“Come suck at the breast,” that is why they don’t speak, that’s why I don’t speak Kim.

MK: ɔ- ɔ- komɔgó ha yeni.

Oh- this, their child.

KJ: Komɔgwɛ-

A child-

MK: Landa binde, yɛ binde ha hɔ́ Mɛndemɔi?

What is the reason, why do they speak Mende?

KJ: Yɛ- yeni binde ha jo hɔ́ Mɛndemɔi? (MK: Mm.) ɛ- agbɛna ha, yi ha go kɛ moga, ɛ- “nyini gbɔɛi, nyini gbɔɛi, nyini gbɔɛi.”

Why do they speak Mende **now**? (Yes.) Eh- their parents, we would give them the breast, eh- “Drink at the breast, drink at the breast, drink at the breast. [in Mende]”

Nava mia. Yeni hun yipɛ hɔ́wa.

That is the reason [said in Mende]. That is the reason the speaking finished.

Nava mia = Mende.

Yeni hun ha hɔ́wan, ha hun hɔ́wan Mɛndemɔi, ha ce pɛn hɔ́ mɔ́ Kim. Ha ce lo- ha ce mɔ́n te.

That is why they are speaking, they are speaking the Mende language, they no longer speak the Kim language. They don’t- they don’t understand it.

MK: Ha ma hɔ́wan.

They don’t speak it.

KJ: Ha ma hɔ́wa- ha ma hɔ́wa hun, mɔ́ Kimi.

They don’t speak- they don’t speak it, the Kim language.

Landa- a- “Kun moga, kun moga, kun moga,” ha ma hɔ ha hunyɛ.
That’s why- “Drink at the breast, drink at the breast, drink at the breast,”
they don’t speak it.

Wɔ le: Wa bi nyini gbɔɛi, wa bi nyini gbɔɛi, **lɔndɔ! Lɔndɔ! Lɔndɔ!** Ta mia.
She says: “Come drink at the breast, come drink at the breast,”
“_____” That’s it.
Ta mia is Mende for “that’s it.”

MK: Kɛ leila bɛ yini. Mu hɔwa **kɛ** apuma **yɛgi**, wɔ le: hun yan. Wɔ la te, **ba** ɔ
la hun?
But currently. You’re speaking **with** those children, saying: Come here.
Does he understand, does he **know** to come?
Note that it’s not mu le, but wɔ le—does the 3sg wɔ refer back to the
hɔwa?

KJ: Wɔ ce lan te. Wɔ ce lan te gbí. Hun yani, wɔ hun yani, wɔ hun yani, wɔ
ce lan te.
He does not understand. He does not understand at all. Come here, he
comes here, he comes here, he doesn’t understand.

Wɔ cen te Kimmɔi. Ke le binde, bɛ: wa, wa, wa.
He doesn’t understand the Kim language. So that’s why, [you] say: Come,
come, come [in Mende].
bɛ: wa, wa, wa. Mende

MK: ɔɔ-ɔ...

BREAK IN RECORDING

HS: Okay, mu li.

KJ: Yan, ya cani yeni, yan, Yema Kema. Kema Janga.
I myself, I sit here, I, Yema Kema. Kema Janga.

Yaŋ, Kimmɔi mɔ ya hɔɛ, mɔ ya na le hɔ háá, si ya hun taam.
I, it is the Kim language that I have spoken, it is what I spoke all the time,
then I became a grandmother/old woman.

Ya yugi yɛɛ miɛ, ya hun yugi.
I plant my cassava, I plant it.

Pantimɔi kpélé, yaŋ, ya mɔ yugi, Kimmɔ anɔn.
All work, I myself, I plant it [the work], in the Kim language.

Yaŋ, ya mɔ há. Yaŋ kɛɛn, yaŋ ya ya hɔ Kimmɔi. Tamuke, Nyandehun,
pɔɔgwe anɔn kpélé,
I, I do it [the work]. I alone, I, I speak the Kim language. Tamuke,
Nyandehun, in the whole world,

MK: Lɔndɔ ya caní?
Where I live?
Is this a prompt for KJ to tell where she lives?

KJ: Lɔndɔ ya cani.
Where I live.

MK: Cani go yan?
[Do you] live here?

KJ: Ya cani go, ɛ– ɛ– Tamuke yɔn. Tamuke yɔn, yaŋ ya hɔ Kimmɔi.
I live, eh– in Tamuke. In Tamuke, I speak the Kim language.

Yaŋ, ya yen. Yaŋ, Yema– K– Yema Janga.
I, I here. I, Yema– Yema Janga.

END SEGMENT